CHAPTER 5

Some Grammatical and Syntactical Features

Introduction

The Selston dialect has some grammatical and syntactical differences from that variety of spoken English which appears to be common to most of the East Midlands. These differences however, are few in comparison with other distinctive features of pronunciation and vocabulary in the Selston dialect which might cause some difficulties of interpretation to outsiders. Some of the more important features will now be discussed. The following notes do not aim at an exhaustive description but emphasis is given to those constructions which, although not necessarily peculiar to Selston, are not widespread in English usage.

The grammatical and syntactical material is arranged in the following order:

1. Verbal inflexions
2. Auxiliaries
3. Double negatives
4. Pronouns
   A. paradigms
   B. notes: (i) personal pronouns
   (ii) relative pronouns
   (iii) intensive reflexives
   (iv) demonstrative pronouns
5. Prepositional usage

6. Adjectives and adverbs
7. Determiners
   A. definite article
   B. indefinite article

1. Verbal Inflexions

The tense structure of Selston verbs[1] differs in some respects from that of more widely accepted forms of English, particularly in the use of the preterite, the historical present[2] and the past participle.

(a) Preterite

(i) unusual weak forms

The dialect has weak forms of certain verbs which are usually strong in other varieties of English. The weak past forms resemble the form of the first person singular present tense, with the addition of the inflexional suffix [d] if the preceding sound is voiced, or [t] if the preceding sound is unvoiced. Examples are: knowed[3] (knew) - "Everybody knowed everybody"; catched[4] (caught); seed [sɛɪd][5] (saw); drawed[5] (drew); telled (told); selled (sold). The tendency

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1. In this discussion verbs are defined according to Dinneen's classification as "forms that can be combined with the bound forms identifiable as third person singular, present participle, past participle and past tense" (F.P. Dinneen, An Introduction to General Linguistics, New York, 1967, p. 58).
2. According to Sledd (J. Sledd, A Short Introduction to English Grammar, Chicago, 1959, p. 215) the historical present is a present tense used to report past action.
3. Common in Derbyshire and the North.
4. "Catched" is found in Dentdale. See B. Hedevind, The Dialect of Dentdale in the West Riding of Yorkshire, Uppsala, 1967, p. 260. According to Wright "catched" was common in earlier Mod.E. See J. Wright and E.M. Wright, An Elementary Historical New English Grammar, London, 1924, p. 190.
5. Cf. ibid., p. 177. Wright notes the sporadic use of "seed" since the 16th century.
6. Cf. ibid., p. 179. "Drawed" is observed by Wright to be a preterite and past participle form sometimes used in earlier Mod.E. and still common in Midland and Southern dialects.

for a weak form to be preserved is probably reinforced by analogy with weak verbs which constitute a majority of English verbs.

(ii) unusual strong forms

The tendency to use a weak form instead of a strong form is reversed in a few cases. The most familiar English preterite form of "to frighten"[1] is "frightened". In Selston a strong form frit is often used in examples such as: [ɪt͡ʔ frɪt mɪ tə dɛθ] 'It frightened me to death'. Frit is also the commonest past participle form, e.g. [ɛu wə frɪt] 'She was frightened'. Similarly the preterite and past participle forms of "beat" can be bet, which, according to Wright (p. 181), occurred in the 16th and 17th centuries and is "still common in many dialects". The preterite of "peep" can be pep or pept, perhaps by analogy with crept.

All verbs such as "find", "wind" and "bind" which have a present tense ending with ind and past tenses ending with ound have preterite and past participle forms ending with [ɒn] in the dialect, e.g. [fɒn] 'found', [(wɛɪ fɒn ə 'θrɔkɪz] '(we found a thrush's (nest)'. [wɒn] (wɛɪv) 'wound', the preterite and past participle of "wind", occurs in Selston and contains a modification of ME ū. According to Wright

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1. Frit is not mentioned in EDD but OED refers to it as a dialectal past participle, e.g. "1821 CLARE Vill. Minstr. II. 196. The coy hare squats nestling in the corn, Frit at the bow'd ear tott'ring o'er her head." No reference is made to its use as a preterite form.

(p. 85) [waund] as a past participle was due to analogy with past participles like "bound" and "found". Since "bun" [bɒn] and "fun" [fɒn] are the common Selston equivalents of these, it is likely that "wound" [wɒn] was never subject to this analogical change. It is even possible that [bɒn] and [fɒn] occurred by analogy with [wɒn] since they do not develop from ME ū.[1] The forms "twined" and "pounded" occur as [twɒn] and [pɒn], perhaps by analogy with [fɒn], [wɒn] and [bɒn].

(b) Historical Present[2] or non-past

A common feature of the Selston dialect is that where one might expect a past tense there is a tendency to use a present tense in a past context. The historical present form is normally used in conversation and recounting personal experiences for "said". This is evident from the transcriptions where [ɛɪ sɛz] 'he says' rather than the past tense form "he said" very frequently precedes or follows quoted speech. [kɒm] 'come' is normally used for the southern standard past tense form "came", e.g. [ɛɪ kɒm tə ðɪs tʃɔtʃ] 'He came to this church'. Similarly "run" is used for "ran". The historical present is frequently used in narrative: "I groans, curses and blinds a minute or two". The effect in narrative is to increase the immediacy of the events related.[3]

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1. See H. Orton, The Phonology of a South Durham Dialect, Descriptive, Historical, and Comparative, London, 1933, p. 47. [fɒn] and [bɒn] appear in the dialect of Byers Green as a derivation from ME forms containing short u ([ɒ] in the present survey).
2. See p. 232, footnote 2.
3. See Chapter 6, p. 279.

The first person singular and plural of some verbs in the present tense and particularly in the historical present differ from normal English usage and are apparently formed by analogy with the third person singular, e.g. "When we gets there" (historical present).

(c) Past Participle

A number of verbs have a past participle identical in form to the preterite. In most varieties of spoken English the preterite and past participles of these verbs differ in form. "Fall" has a past participle ending with [n] in many dialects, the most widespread form being "fallen".[1] The Selston dialect often uses a past participle "fell" - "Tha'd fell out wi' thi mate", i.e. 'You had fallen out'. "Fell" was used as a past participle by Shakespeare, suggesting that it was a feature of early modern English: "Ten masts at each make not the altitude which thou has perpendicularly fell". (King Lear IV Sc. vi). Also found in Selston are: "I've swore"[ɑ:v swɔ:] (sworn); "I've ate it" [ɑ:v ɛt ɪt] (eaten); "He's drove home" [ɛɪz drɔv ɔm] (driven); "He's took it" [ɛɪz tɪuk ɪt] (taken).

2. Auxiliaries

In the Selston dialect auxiliaries have many distinctive forms not found in more standard varieties of English. These include:

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1. The Penrith form is [fɔ:n]. See P.H. Reaney, A Grammar of the Dialect of Penrith (Cumberland), Descriptive and Historical with Specimens and a Glossary, Manchester, 1927, p. 159. The Dentdale form is [fo:n]. See Hedevind, The Dialect of Dentdale, p. 258.

(a) The use of northern plural forms resembling the singular

Although distinct plural forms of the auxiliaries do occur in Selston, there is a tendency for what is apparently a singular form to follow a plural subject, e.g. "Hens as doesn't lay, doesn't pay," "These is in t'good old days," "T'geese was definitely drowned here," "Them tools is non there". Historically, however, these are plural forms in northern dialect.

A similar tendency occurs with the verb "like" but only after a relative pronoun [əz]: "It's all right for them as likes it".[1]

(b) Negation of auxiliaries

There are two ways of negating auxiliaries, both completely interchangeable.

(i) [nə]

The negatives of all auxiliaries except "used", "going to" and "ought" can end with [nə], e.g. ['ɛnə] is not, are not, am not; ['ɪznə] is not; ['wɔznə] ['wɔnə] was not, were not; ['ɛɪnə] ['ɛnə] ['anə] ['avnə] have not; ['anə] ['aznə] has not; ['adnə] had not; ['dɔnə] do not; ['dɔznə] does not; ['wɪlnə] ['wɪnə] will not; ['wɔdnə] would not; ['ʃanə] shall not; ['ʃɔdnə] should not;

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1. While this is most likely a continuation of the northern plural form, it could possibly be a vestigial form of the ME and early MnE impersonal use of "like", e.g. Shakespeare, Hamlet: King: "It likes us well" (II ii 80). It may even be due to the influence of the relative pronoun, as the sentence "It's all right for them as wants it," is possible in Selston.

['kanə] cannot; ['kʊdnə] could not; ['mʊnə] must not; ['dɔsnə] dare not (otherwise ['dɔspt]); ['nɛdnə] need not.

The negative suffix [nə] suggests northern influence as it is widespread in Scotland, e.g. Burns, "Tam O'Shanter": "Ae market-day thou was na sober," "Tam did na mind the storm a whistle", "I wonder did na turn thy stomach," "A running stream they dare na cross," although the lines:

"We think na on the lang Scots miles,"
"Fair play, he cared na deils a boddle,"

illustrate the use of [nə] to negate verbs other than auxiliaries, a tendency not found in Selston.

The suffix [nə] does seem common, however, in Selston - more so than in some more northerly dialects. Reaney gives the negative versions of auxiliaries for Penrith, Cumberland and although this is considerably north of Nottinghamshire, his only example of the suffix [nə] is [kanə] 'cannot', which also has the equivalents [kanət] and [ka:nt]. Most Penrith negatives appear to end with [nt][1]. Orton, for Byers Green, South Durham, gives [wɪnə][2] won't, and [kɑnə][3] cannot, but [mʊnt][4] must not.

Hedevind, for Dentdale, West Riding of Yorkshire, deals fully with the negatives of auxiliaries,[5] but no form

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1. See Reaney, A Grammar of the Penrith Dialect, p. 166.
2. Phonology of a South Durham Dialect, p. 302.
3. Ibid., p. 276.
4. Ibid., p. 289.
5. See The Dialect of Dentdale, pp. 263-267.

ends with [nə]; all end in [t], e.g. /dɑ:rnt/ dare not, /kɑnɔt/ /kɑ(:)nt/ cannot, or in [n], e.g. /duən(t)/ dare not.[1] In all the examples from Selston of negated auxiliaries ending with [nə] the auxiliary itself is stressed and the negative suffix [nə] is unstressed. [nə] appears to have an equivalent function to [nt], "n't", as in "can't" familiar in many varieties of spoken English.

(ii) [nɔn]

[nɔn] is the equivalent of the "not" of more standard varieties of English. EDD records its use in a variety of dialects including North and West Yorkshire, Lancashire, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire. In Selston, negative constructions involving [nɔn] can be interchanged with those involving [nə] without change in emphasis or meaning, e.g. [ɛɪd nɔn lɪuk] 'he'd not look', [ɛɪ 'wɑdnə lɪuk] 'he wouldn't look'. Where [nɔn], which usually has some degree of stress above minimal, is used, the auxiliary is generally unstressed, whereas [nə], itself unstressed, is used with a stressed auxiliary, e.g. [ɑ: kəd nɔn sɛɪ] [ɑ: 'kɑdnə sɛɪ] 'I could not see', [ðə mə nɔn gɔ:] [ðə 'mɔnə gɔ:] 'You must not go'. Shortened (unstressed) forms of the auxiliary ([z] [l] [d]) joined to their preceding subjectives, are used where [nɔn] occurs with the following: is, am, have has, had, will, would, shall, should. Examples are given

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1. The above words quoted from Reaney, Orton and Hedevind are transcribed as in their books. None of the authors indicate syllabic stress in these examples.

below, together with equivalent constructions using [nə]: [ɛɪz nɔn ðɪə] [ɛɪ 'ɪznə ðɪə] He is not there; [ɛɪz nɔn bɪn] [ɛɪ 'əznə bɪn] He has not been; [wɛɪl nɔn gɔ:] [wɛɪ 'wɪlnə gɔ:] We will not go; [wɛɪd nɔn lɪuk] [wɛɪ 'wədnə lɪuk] We would not look.

In some negative constructions where [nɔn] negates the auxiliary "are", the auxiliary is so lightly stressed that it disappears, e.g. [wɛɪ nɔn 'gɔɪn] We are not going; [wɛɪ nɔn 'klɛvə] We are not clever; [jo^{ʊ} nɔn 'lɪsnɪn] You are not listening. Where [nə] is used, the auxiliary, being stressed, is never omitted.

(c) Omission of the Auxiliary

Many speakers of the Selston dialect pronounce no phonetic element of the morpheme "are" in examples such as: "They nubdi" (They are nobody, i.e. they are unimportant), "We clever", "We goin to t'shop". The loss of "are" in these examples is probably due to syncope of the unstressed auxiliary [ə]. The process may be assisted by the fact that "are" lacks a pronounced consonant when immediately followed by a consonant. In contexts where "are" precedes a vowel [r] may be pronounced, as in most varieties of English, e.g. [wɛɪr at ɔm] 'we are at home', but [wɛɪ ət ɔm] would be more usual. "Art", the form of the auxiliary used with [ðə] is usually reduced to [t] before a vowel, e.g. [ðat ə rɛɪt ən] 'You are a right one'.

In passive constructions, although "are" and "were" are quite commonly pronounced, they can be omitted, e.g.

[jə mɛid ə 'membrə$^{?}$ 'mɔdə lɔdʒ] 'You are made a member of the Mother Lodge'. [jə] could include a reduced form of "are" but as [jə^{ə} mɛid] would be quite possible in the example the auxiliary has probably been completely lost.

Loss of "were" or "wert" occurs in [ðə nəud ɔ: rɑ:nʧ 'vilidʒ] 'You were known all round the village'. Loss of the auxiliary is probably complete here as no vestige of [w] or [t] from "were" or "wert" remains.

3. Double Negatives

In common with earlier forms of English and other dialects double negatives, intended to strengthen the negation rather than to cancel it, are common in the Selston dialect, e.g. "Don't tell nobody", "I can't hardly make it work", "Didn't no more stuff come through that hole?" "They didna like you to waste nowt (i.e. nothing)". The use of double negatives to convey emphasis is noted by Reaney,[1] but their use does not always signify emphasis in Selston, variation in stress and pitch being a more effective means of establishing this. It is possible for more than two negatives to be used when particular emphasis is desired. One informant, speaking of the coal owners, said, "They never bought nowt but what didn't pay" (meaning "They never bought anything that didn't pay"). Four negatives are used here in one sentence (if "but" (i.e. except) introducing the

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1. A Grammar of the Dialect of Penrith, p. 169.

second clause is considered a negative since it has the effect of negation). A few seconds later he repeated the information, not to correct himself but to recapitulate, and in this case he modified it to a simple negative: "They didn't buy things as didn't pay". The fact that the second version was repeated with less vocal stress on the negative element than the first suggests that in this case the compound negatives were being used to give particular emphasis. Negatives were used by Chaucer to similar effect:

"He nevere yet no vileiny ne saide
In al his lif unto no maner wight."[1]

4. Pronouns

Pronouns, according to Dinneen[2] are forms distinct from nouns in that the form of the pronoun differs in the preverbal (subject) and postverbal (object) position, e.g. "he hit him". Pronouns merit consideration here, because as they retain certain distinctions between cases, unlike other types of nominal, peculiarities of agreement between subjects, objects and verbs may occur, as is evident in the Selston dialect. Examples are: "It was him", "These is them", "Them's ours", "Thee stop here". In these cases, what would be in the more standard dialects an objective form, is made to function as a subjective.

(a) Paradigms

Paradigms of Selston pronouns are given below. Stressed and unstressed forms are given, unstressed forms

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1. Prologue to the Canterbury Tales, l. 70-71.
2. An Introduction to General Linguistics, p. 58.

as listed signifying minimal stress in the dialect. Stressed forms are liable to occur not only to express special emphasis,[1] but where there is any degree of stress above minimal. The reason is that there is no apparent difference in pronunciation between strongly stressed and moderately stressed pronouns, whereas pronouns under minimal stress do sometimes differ in pronunciation from forms where there is any noticeable stress.

PERSONAL PRONOUNS

1st PERSON

	Singular		Plural	
	stressed	unstressed	stressed	unstressed
SUBJECTIVE	[ɑ:]	[ɑ][a][ə]	[wɛɪ]	[wɛ][wɪ]
OBJECTIVE	[mɛɪ]	[mɪ]	[ɷz]	[əz]

2nd PERSON

	Singular		Plural	
	stressed	unstressed	stressed	unstressed
SUBJECTIVE	[ðɑ][ðɛɪ] [jɔu]	[ðɑ][tə][tɪ] [tɨ][ðɪ][jə]	[jɔu]	[jə]
OBJECTIVE	[ðɛɪ][jɔu]	[ðɪ][jə]	[jɔu]	[jə]

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1. Cf. Hedevind, The Dialect of Dentdale, p. 239. In Hedevind's paradigms "strong" forms are used only to express special emphasis. Cf. ibid., pp. 238-9 for historical reasons for differences between strong and weak forms of pronouns.

3rd PERSON

Singular

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter	
SUBJECTIVE	[ɛɪ][æɪ] stressed or unstressed	[ɛu][ou] [ʃɛɪ][ʃi:] stressed or unstressed	[ɪt]	stressed or unstressed
OBJECTIVE	[ɪm] stressed or unstressed	[ə:] stressed [ə] unstressed	[ɪt]	

Plural

SUBJECTIVE [ðeɪ] stressed
[ðɛ][ðɪ] stressed or unstressed

OBJECTIVE [ðɛm] stressed
[ðəm][əm] unstressed

POSSESSIVE PRONOUNS

(i) CONJOINT

		Singular		Plural	
		stressed	unstressed	stressed	unstressed
1st Person		[mɒɪ]	[mɪ][ma][1]	[a:][2]([a:r] before vowel) [ɑ:][2]([ɑ:r] before vowel) [ɷz]	[əz]
2nd Person		[ðɒɪ]	[ðɪ]	[jɔ:]([jɔ:r] before vowel) [juə]([juər] before vowel)	[jə] ([jər] before vowel)
3rd Person	masc	[ɪz]	[ɪz]		
	fem	[ə:]([ə:r] before vowel)	[ə]([ər] before vowel)	[ðɛə]([ðɛər] before vowel)	[ðə]([ðər] before vowel)
	neut	[ɪts]	[ɪts]		

(ii) ABSOLUTE

		Singular	Plural
1st Person		[mɒɪn]	[a:z] [a:n][3]
2nd Person		[ðɒɪn]	[jɔ:n][3] [juən][3]
3rd Person	masc	[ɪz] [ɪzn̩][3]	
	fem	[ə:z] [ə:n][3]	[ðɛəz] [ðɛən][3]

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1. [ma] is used in forms of address such as [ma'lad] 'my lad', [ma'las] 'my lass', [ma'son] 'my son'. [ma:(a:)jɛuθ] 'my younger brother'. [a: dʒak] 'our Jack',
2. used in referring to members of the family, e.g. "his one". The ending would perhaps be
3. possibly a contraction of a form containing "one", e.g. reinforced by analogy with [mɒɪn] and [ðɒɪn].

REFLEXIVE PRONOUNS

	Singular	Plural
1st person	[mɪ'sɛn] [mɪ]	[əz'sɛn(z)] [əz]
2nd person	[ðɪ'sɛn] [jə'sɛn] [ðɪ]	[jə'sɛnz]
3rd person	masc: [ɪz'sɛn] fem: [ə'sɛn] neut: [ɪt'sɛn]	[ðə'sɛnz] [əm'sɛnz]

B. Notes

(i) Personal Pronouns

Objective Forms functioning as Subjectives

There are cases in which the objective form of the personal pronoun is used where the subjective form would be expected in the regional standard, e.g. [ɪt wəz ɪm] 'It was him', [ɪt wə mɛɪ] 'It was me', [mɛɪ ən ɪm wɪ ðɪə] 'Me and him were there'.[1]

The objective form of the first person pronoun [ɷz] [əz] functions as a subjective in emphatic situations, e.g. [ɷz 'kɔljəz].

The objective form of the personal pronoun in some cases precedes a relative when a subjective form would be expected. For instance [ɪm] and [ðɛm], the third person singular and plural pronouns "him" and "them": [ɪm əz kɷm tə 'dʒaksdeɪl] 'He who came to Jacksdale', [ðɛm əz wɔkt ðɪə] 'They who worked there'.

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1. See also the use of "thee", p. 248.

In [ʊz əz ez ɪə] 'We who are here', [ʊz] precedes a relative where a subjective form would be expected. The use of [ʊz] as a subjective pronoun may be reinforced by the use of a similar sound as the first person plural possessive adjective "our", usually occurring unstressed as [əz], and also by its use as the first element of the reflexive pronoun [ʊz'sɛnz] 'ourselves'.

Another peculiarity of [ʊz] [əz], normally plural, is its use in referring to a single person, e.g. [gɪv əz ə drɪŋk].[1]

2nd Person

As in other dialects, for instance Yorkshire, Derbyshire and Somerset, "thou" and "thee" are familiar forms of address used generally in informal situations, especially by the older and more conservative speakers. "You" is used in more formal situations by such speakers, and in all registers by persons influenced greatly by wide regional standards. "Thy" and "you" occur in corresponding circumstances. In a conversation it is not unusual to hear a speaker using "thou", "thee", "thy", and also "you", "your" to address the same person within the continuum of one speech. Both forms may even occur in one sentence, e.g. [jə jɑ's tə ɛɪ ti gǫ: ðɪə ða no^{ʊ}z] 'You used to have to go there thou knows', [jə mɛɪd ə 'mɛmbrə? 'mɔðə lɔ̈dʒ wɛn ðɐ sɪks'tɛɪn] 'You are made a member

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1. Reaney notes a similar tendency in the Penrith dialect. A Grammar of the Penrith Dialect, p. 145.

of the Mother Lodge when thou (art) sixteen'. Here the tendency to mix the forms of address may be due to the fact that the fieldworker, a comparative stranger, was being addressed and the register used was neither formal nor completely informal. At the beginning of such interviews the ratio of "you" forms to "thou" forms was greater than towards the end when more familiarity was established.

The form of the second person singular pronoun differs in certain circumstances. [tə] [tɪ] and [t̪ɨ] and sometimes [ðɪ] have a similar meaning, in lightly stressed positions, to [ðə], the second person singular subjective, although [ðə] may be used in unstressed positions: [ɪf t̪ɨ 'weʲɪn brɛd n̩ tʃɛɪz ðə wᵊ ɛ'ɪn brɛd n̩ tʃɛɪz | ðə 'dɪdn̩t ɛɪ brɛd n̩ 'botər ən tʃɛɪz] 'If you were having bread and cheese you were having bread and cheese. You didn't have bread and butter and cheese'. [ɪt?s dʒɔs ðə pleɪs əz tə lɪvz ɪn ðat?s ɔ:] 'It's just the place that you live in, that's all'. [tə] is a form in much more regular use than [tɪ]. [tɪ] is an occasional variant usually following a high front sound, no doubt echoing it and coloured by it, e.g. [ɪf tɪ] in the first of the two sentences quoted above, as opposed to [əz tə] in the second. The use of [tɪ] is not consistent, as ['wɪltə] 'will you' is quite common, and the high front vowel of the first element is not echoed. Further examples of [tə] are: ['waltə 'wɪltə 'gɔtə 'nɔtə] 'Walter will you go to Nuthall?'[1] [ɪf ðə stɔd ɔp tə ðɪ nɛk ɪn mɔk ən ɑɪ ɔld

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1. A humorous remark frequently used to tease a Selston man who referred to Nuthall as "Nutta", probably by analogy with "Watna" (Watnall) and "Huckna" (Hucknall), other villages nearby.

ə 'rɔʔp ɛg əʔ ðɪ | ʃod tə dɔk‖ ʃod tə] 'If you stood up to your neck in muck and I holled (threw) a rotten egg at you, should you duck? Should you?' An unaccented, elided form of "thou" is frequently found before vowels. According to J. & E.M. Wright this was a ME form common in NE e.g. "th'art". A common example of Selston sarcasm is [ðɑ:t ə rɑɪt ən] 'You are a right one'.

Although [ða] 'thou' is the most frequent second person singular subjective, [ðɛɪ] 'thee' (usually an objective form) is often used subjectively for [ða], especially in stressed positions, e.g. used imperatively: [ðɛɪ gɔ fəʔ ni:lz] 'Thee go for the nails'; [ðɛɪ stɔp ɪə] 'Thee stop here'. This could be a survival from the Elizabethan period when, according to Wright[1] "'thee' was often used for 'thou' just as it still is among Quakers". "Thee" is occasionally used as a subjective plural, e.g. referring to a group of sons, "You get up in a morning, it's my fault thee've overlaid". (Note again the use of "you" and "thee" in the same sentence.)

In addition to its use as a subjective, [ðɛɪ] 'thee' is also used as the second person singular objective, particularly when stressed: [wɛɪl plɪ: wɪ əz'sɛnz | wɛɪ 'ɛnə 'gɔnə plɪ: wɪ ðɛɪ] 'We'll play by ourselves, we aren't going to play with you'. Under minimal stress [ðɪ] is used instead of [ðɛɪ], e.g. [a sl skɛlp ðɪ ma lad] 'I'll skelp (hit) you my lad'.

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1. An Elementary Historical New English Grammar, p. 149.

Personal Pronouns used Reflexively

With some verbs, particularly in the second person imperative, the objective case of the personal pronoun functions reflexively. This was common usage in OE and ME[1] and is found in Shakespeare: "Get thee to a nunnery" (Hamlet). In the Selston dialect the imperatives of "see" and "sit", and occasionally other verbs, occur with [ðɪ], a contraction of "thee", e.g. [sɪ ðɪ ɪə] 'see here', [sɪʔ ðɪ da:n] 'sit down', [sɪ ðɪ əʔ 'ɔsəz] 'see the horses', [bɔuʔ ðɪ ɔf] 'bolt (i.e. run) off'.

Verbal Suffix with Second Person Pronoun

When the second person singular pronoun "thou" and its variants is used as the subject of verbs in the present tense, the verbs usually have a suffix [z] or [s] whereas a negative suffix is used if the address is "you, e.g. [ða nɔuz] 'thou knows', but [jə nɔu] 'you know', [ɪf ða kɔmz] 'if thou comes', [ða lɪuks 'dɔtɪ | ɛɪ ə wɛʃ] 'Thou looks dirty, have a wash', [wɪᵩ dɔs ðɛɪ kɔm frɔm] 'Where does thee come from?' [dɔs tə sɛɪ] 'Does thou see?' It may be that this suffix [z] represents a vestigial form of the old "est", e.g. "if thou comest", possibly reinforced by analogy with the third person singular.

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1. See F. Mossé, Manuel de l'anglais du moyen âge des origines au XIV^e siècle, Tome 2: Moyen-anglais, Paris, 1949, paragraph 120. Cf. Hedevind, The Dialect of Dentdale, pp. 242, 243.

Third Person

Selston forms are given in the paradigm. [ɛu] [ou] 'she' is a form deriving from OE "hēo", and may be used stressed or unstressed, e.g. [ɛu 'mɔðəd ðɛɪz bɔdz] 'She mothered these birds', [ðɪər ɛu ɪz] 'There she is'. [ɛɪ] 'he', [wɛɪ] 'we', and [ʃɛɪ] 'she' are diphthongized survivals of the ME "hē", "wē" and "schē" which, in Selston, must have missed the shift to [i:] at the end of the 15th century.[1] [ʃɛɪ] 'she' is quite common among speakers with a minimum of outside influence but [ʃi:] and [hi:] 'he', as in RP, occur because of incursions of the regional standard. The plural [əm] 'them' "'em" is an unstressed derivation from the old unaccented 'h' form (ME hem, OE him, hiom, heom) and is common in the colloquial standard language.[2]

In constructions in which the subject and auxiliary are inverted, e.g. questions, if the subject is a pronoun, its case can be objective, whereas northern and southern standard speech would employ a subjective form. Examples from Selston are: "What the devil does 'em call these things?". This tendency is well known in Somerset. "Should us?" is very common for "Should we?" although "Should him?" does not occur. Other examples are, "Where does thee come from?", "What did thee do?".

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1. See J. Wright: An Elementary Historical New English Grammar, p. 47, pp. 150-151.
2. Ibid., p. 151.

(ii) Relative Pronouns

Some of the preceding examples, e.g. [ðɛm əz wɔkt ðɪə] (p. 245) illustrate the use of [əz] 'as' as a relative instead of 'who', 'which', 'that'. Reaney notes this as an occasional form of the Penrith dialect:[1] [əz] frequently represents "that" in the following type of sentence: ['dɔnə θɪŋk əz wɛɪ wɨ 'rɛulɪn ɪn 'mɔnɪ] 'Do not think that we were rolling in money'. Joe Gargery, in Dickens's Great Expectations, uses this form: "You know, Pip', replied Joe, 'as you and me were ever friends'."

"Which" can be used as normally in English but is sometimes used in unusual circumstances as a simple conjunction: [ɛɪ sɛz ɑl kɔm da:n ən ɛɪ ə lɪuk wɪtʃ ɛɪ wɨ əz gɔd əz ɨz wɔd] 'He says, "I'll come down and have a look", which he was as good as his word'. "I'm non making myself a saint, which I'm a long way from being one".

(iii) Intensive Reflexives

These are as noted in the paradigm (p.245). According to Wright, [ɪz'sɛn] 'hissen' derives from ME himselfen.[2] The first element "his" retains the pronoun form which supplanted the dative of the personal pronoun in the 13th century and disappeared in the standard language about the end of the 15th century.[3] "Theirselves" underwent a similar process.

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1. A Grammar of the Dialect of Penrith, p. 151.
2. An Elementary Historical New English Grammar, p. 151.
3. Ibid., p. 152.

"Ussens" could have derived from ME "usselfe" but there is a possibility that the initial element "us" may be possessive and related to "us" meaning "our". The "sen" suffix, descended from ME se(lfe)n or (se(lve)n, is observed by Hedevind[1] to be common in N. Midland dialects, both in the singular and in the plural, and to occur as a rare exception in Dentdale.

"Sen" is omitted in certain cases, e.g. "Sit thee down", [wɛɪ ʃəd wɛʃ əz ɪnʔ 'panʃən] 'We should wash ourselves in the pancheon'.[2]

(iv) Demonstrative Pronouns

Special forms of the demonstrative pronouns and adjectives occur in Selston. "Those" is rarely used, "them" being used instead. "There" and "here" are frequently inserted in demonstrative constructions, e.g. "Them there books", "That there book", "This here table", "These here folks". This tendency has been observed in several other dialects, e.g. Penrith.[3]

5. Prepositional Usage

There are several peculiarities involving prepositions. "With" is often used where other dialects would use "by", e.g.

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1. The Dialect of Dentdale, p. 244. See J.A. Sheard, The Dialect of Lower Calderdale (Yorkshire, W.R.), Ph.D. diss. London University, 1940, paragraph 511. See J. Wright, A Grammar of the Dialect of Windhill in the West Riding of Yorkshire, EDS (Ser. C) 67. London 1892, paragraph 353. See SED for S. La. and S. YW.).
2. For reflexive use of [ðɪ] 'thee', see p. 249.
3. See Reaney, A Grammar of the Dialect of Penrith, p. 149.

"You'd had to be pessed fit <u>with</u> a doctor", and "They're ploughed up <u>with</u> farmers, these footpads is". (The distinction made in standard English between the agent and the instrument is lost here, and the sentence would suggest that farmers were used instead of ploughs if the context permitted. Speakers would not say "You'll be chased (or run) by the bobby", but, "You'll be run wi' t' bobby", "There's been many a man killed with a pothole". "At" is used in the following sentence: "Sithee at th'hosses" (see the horses). "At" or [ə] occurs before names of days of the week: [əʔ 'ʃɒndɪ].[1]

The preposition "to" is omitted after "belong", e.g. "It belongs him". "By" often stands on its own instead of the expression "by the time", e.g. [ðad 'fɪnɪʃt skɪul bɪ ðə wə tɛn] 'You had finished school by (the time) you were ten', ['ɪt] bɪ wɒn ə'klɔk bɪ jə 'dɪnəz 'rɛdɪ] 'It'll be one o'clock by (the time) your dinner's ready'.

"Of" or its equivalent [ə] or [ɔn] can be used in unusual circumstances, e.g. [wɛɪ 'wi:ʔn̩ əʔ 'gaŋgə] 'We are waiting for the ganger', [ɪf ðə wə 'wi:ʔn̩ ɔn əm 'fɪlɪn ə 'kɒpl ə tɒbz] 'If you were waiting for them to fill a couple of tubs'. Sometimes the prepositions "of" and "to" are omitted altogether, e.g. in referring to named places: "He came top Maxborough" meaning "He came to the top of

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1. See Chapter 8, p. 329. Cf. Hedevind, <u>The Dialect of Dentdale</u>, p. 268.

Mexborough", "I went bottom end Shepherd's", meaning: "I went to the bottom end of the Shepherd's Rest".

"Up" can be used to reinforce the past participle "overgrown": "overgrown up". "Up" is also used in the expression, "any road up" meaning "anyway".

"In" is usually contracted to "i" before a consonant, e.g. [ɪ ðɛm di:z] 'in them days'. A similar loss of etymological final 'n' is noted by Orton in the weakly stressed form of "in" in Byers Green.[1] The tendency appears to have been well known in E Mod E, for instance, in Shakespeare: "To cut his throat i' the church",[2] "Like one i' the stocks".[3]

"On" and less frequently "off" are used in connection with local small mining towns which have one main street, e.g. if somebody comes "off Eastwood" it means they live near the centre of Eastwood. It is usual for acquaintances to meet "on Eastwood" or "on Somercoates" or "on t'town" rather than "in" or "at" Eastwood etc. It would be interesting to discover whether the notion of being <u>on</u> a town, rather than <u>in</u> it, is peculiar to mining communities where colliers would literally find themselves in or under the town most of the time. However, the fact that the most notable places concerned are situated on hills or on elevated

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1. <u>The Phonology of a South Durham Dialect</u>, p. 144.
2. <u>Hamlet</u>, Act IV, Sc. vii.
3. <u>Coriolanus</u>, Act V, Sc. iii.

ground may account for the tendency. The expression is known in Sheffield, e.g. [ɔnʔ 'ʃə:tlɪf] 'on t'Shirecliffe' (an elevated area of Sheffield).

The omission of prepositions "to" and "of" explained previously suggests that Selston speakers regard word position as a more important guide to syntactical meaning than case, at least in the examples given.

6. Adjectives and Adverbs

There are many adjectives in the Selston dialect which are lexically interesting, some, like "throng" [θrɔŋ] (busy) are well known in northern dialects; others, for instance, "ormin" ['ɔ:mɪn] (large and ungainly) are not recorded in EDD as used outside Nottinghamshire. Others suggest an interesting and original derivation, for example "potawky" ['pɒtɔ:kɪ] (cheap, crude, ugly - often said of ornaments), probably referring to the wares of pot hawkers. Similarly, some adverbs and adverbial constructions are lexically interesting, for instance, "Sin" (probably from OE "syðan", is more common among traditional Selston speakers than "ago", e.g. "fifty two year sin", "you asked me a bit sin ..." [nɛɪ] (nigh, nearly - Anglian nēh) is a common Selston adverb e.g. [ɪtʔ nɛɪ kɪld mɪ] 'it nearly killed me'.[1] "An' all" [ən ɔ:] (as well, in addition) is frequently used as in the rest of Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, and other dialects.

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1. Cf. Hedevind, The Dialect of Dentdale, p. 234.

All the above examples are notable for lexical reasons. It is, however, intended to deal in the present chapter with grammar and syntax rather than lexicography, and the Selston dialect has very few peculiarities in the use of adjectives or adverbs. Paradigms of comparatives and superlatives are unnecessary here as there appear to be no grammatical peculiarities in their formation in Selston. There is, however, one irregular tendency regarding the use of superlative forms which Selston does share with many other dialects. This is the tendency to use a superlative form when comparing two objects without the use of "than", e.g. "Which is the {best / cleanest} of them two?" When the comparative form does occur it is often followed by [nə] instead of "than", e.g. [nɔu 'fo̤ðə nə 'wæswɑd] 'no further than Westwood'.[1] The superlative form is also generally preferred to the comparative in sentences like "You'd best wait and see".

There is a tendency in Selston for adverbs and adjectives to be alike in form. The suffix "-ly" is often omitted in adverbial constructions: "He did it easy", "talk proper".[2]

Constructions in which an adjective is intensified by an adverb seem to favour lexically unusual intensifiers,[3] and,

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1. Cf. Hedevind, The Dialect of Dentdale, p. 234.
2. Cf. ibid., p. 235.
3. Sometimes called adverbs of degree or intensifying qualifiers. See W.N. Francis, The Structure of American English, New York, 1958, p. 278.

as intensifiers form a class of adverbs, this tendency can be considered to be of grammatical as well as lexical importance. "Fair" is regularly used for "quite", "completely" or "entirely" etc.[1] Examples are: "Her rasping voice fair drowned everything", "I fair holled it" (I really threw it). "Right", as in the West Riding of Yorkshire, is used to mean "very", "to the full", "really", e.g. [nɔʔ rɛɪt ʃɑ:p] 'not right sharp', i.e. stupid, [ə rɛɪt gɔd 'dɪnə] 'a really good dinner'. [grɛt] 'great' is frequently used both as an adjective of size [ə grɛt stɔun] 'a great stone', and as an adverb intensifying "big": [ə grɛt bɪg pɒɪ] 'a great big pie'. "Full" is sometimes used to intensify adjectives. "He's full young" (he's very young), "It's full hot".[2] "Clinking", "rasping" and "nation" can be used adverbially to intensify adjectives such as "good". "Much" is sometimes used in constructions such as the following: "I wanna much lewkin" (I wasn't really looking), "He didna much care" (He didn't care much).

"Regular" ['rɛglə] (complete, thorough) is a common adjective in Selston, e.g. [ɛuz ə 'rɛglə 'nɪusn̩s] 'She's a regular nuisance'.

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1. Cf. Hedevind, The Dialect of Dentdale, p. 236.
2. The use of "full" as an intensifier was frequent in ME, for instance, Chaucer, Prologue to the Canterbury Tales: "ful simple and coy", l.119, "a ful curious pin", l.196, and in E Mod E: "In both our armies there is many a soul/ Shall pay full dearly for this encounter ..." (H IV Pt 1, Act V, Sc. i. It was also known in the 18th century - "Full many a gem of purest ray serene" - Gray, "Elegy written in a country churchyard".

As in many dialects, well known oaths and swear words can be used to intensify adjectives and adverbs and to emphasise nouns, e.g.: [ɛɪ went rɛɪt ra:nd 'blɔdɪ 'sʊməkɔʊts] 'He went right round bloody Somercoates'.

7. Determiners

A. Definite Article

Before a consonant, the definite article "the" is either completely omitted, or reduced to a glottal stop [ʔ], or to a sound [t͡ʔ] articulated with synchronic glottal closure. [ðɪ 'dra:ndəd͡ʔgɛɪs || gɛɪs wəz 'dɛfᵊnət͡ʔlɪ dra:ᵊnd ɪə] 'They drowned the geese, the geese were definitely drowned here'. Before vowels, the process is sometimes similar, and the [t] is sometimes distinctly pronounced without glottalisation, e.g. [tɛud tɷp] 'the old tup', but frequently [ð], a reduced form of "the", is used, e.g. [ðɛud 'mɔðə] 'the old mother', [ðɛud gɛɪmz] 'the old games', [ɪ 'ðɔvn] 'in the oven', [ɪ 'ðandgɔt di:z] 'in the hand-got days'. A joke once heard in Selston depends for its effect upon familiarity with the reduced form of "the" before a vowel. Two old men are at a concert listening to an orchestra. One of them notices that there is no harpist and asks the other "Where's th'arpist?" His companion whispers in reply, "Under t'seat, where's thar?".

The use of the definite article instead of a possessive pronoun in speaking of members of the family and parts of the

body which is noted by Reaney[1] occurs in the Selston dialect, e.g. [brɪŋʔ 'mɪsɪs] 'bring the missis', i.e. bring your wife, [ɪz ɡɒt ʔ rɪu'matɪks ɪnʔ ni:] 'He's got rheumatics in the knee'. The last example [ʔ rɪu'matɪks] shows the use of the definite article with diseases, which is common in Selston, e.g. [ʔ mɒmps] 'mumps', [ʔ 'ɪkɒps] 'hiccups'.[2]

Occasionally the definite article is used in situations where the indefinite article, or the omission of the article, would be more widespread in English, e.g. [ðɛud 'mɔðər ad sɒm 'blak'lɛdɪn tə dɪu ɪ ðɛm di:z] 'An old mother (or old mothers or women) had some blackleading to do in them days'.

B. Indefinite Article

The indefinite article "a", "an" can be omitted, particularly after a vowel: [dɪ wɨ tə'rɪfɪk stɔ:m] 'There was a terrific storm', [ɪʔ wɪ 'ɪŋlən^{d}z 'glo̜:rɪ 'matʃbɔks] 'It was an England's Glory matchbox'.

The expression ['tɪu θrɪ] 'two or three', is frequently, but not always, preceded by an indefinite article: [ɛɪd tɛl mɪ ə 'tɪu θrɪ teɪlz] 'He'd tell me two or three tales', [ə'tɪu θrɪ wɪk] 'Two or three weeks' - in this case it is grammatically similar to a "twelvemonth" or a "sennight".

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1. A Grammar of the Penrith Dialect, p. 138.
2. Cf. Hedevind, The Dialect of Dentdale, p. 227.